

NIE



Wordy news

PERIL
– exposure to injury, loss, destruction, risk, jeopardy or danger



Did you know?

Australia's Murray–Darling River system is the third longest navigable river in the world, after the Amazon and Nile.



Rivers on the run

"Rivers are the arteries of our planet; they are lifelines in the truest sense." – Mark Angelo

CARVING a path through the land from their headwaters to their mouths, rivers play a very important role and are key features in the Australian landscape.

Starting at the highest point in an area, rivers flow downstream, gaining more water from other sources such as creeks, springs and rainfall, before emptying into a larger body of water, such as an ocean, sea or lake.

Rivers are usually described in terms of their catchment areas. This means the entire river system, from its source, all its tributaries

and down to its mouth.

On their journey, rivers pass through many different environments – mountains, forests, wetlands, farmlands, cities and towns – constantly changing and providing a much-needed resource for all living things.

Role of the river

Australia is home to many rivers that have been important to indigenous people for thousands of years. Their knowledge, awareness and attachment to the life of a river has allowed them to engage in productive activities in and around them.

Most settlements are built along major rivers because they give us

water for drinking, food, energy, recreation, transport routes and irrigation for crops.

Australia is a dry continent and because of this we rely on our river systems to provide the much-needed water that supports ecosystems, industries, farming and communities.

Therefore it is important to conserve and better manage our river systems.

Rivers rule

A river curves and turns so the precise measurement of a river's length is not easy to calculate. As a result, the length measurements of many rivers are approximations but the use of topographic maps make calculations more accurate.

FLOWING FACTS

- Less than one-fifth of the rain that falls in Australia ends up in its rivers.
- Australian rivers have irregular flow patterns, meaning sometimes a river is wide, deep and fast-flowing and sometimes it is shallow, narrow and slow-flowing.
- Brackish water is found at the point where fresh water from a river meets the salt water from an ocean or sea.
- Rivers flow in channels. The bottom of the channel is called the bed and the sides of the channel are called the banks.

IN THE NEWS

Dry river bed race

THE town of Alice Springs is 1500km from the nearest large body of water but this does not stop the community from holding a boat race.

Each year the famous English rowing race the Henley-on-Thames Regatta is re-created along the dry river bed of the rarely-flowing Todd River.

The multi-race program, the Henley-on-Todd, began in 1962 and has been officially declared an iconic sporting event, being the single longest-running event in the Northern Territory.

The Henley-on-Todd is a fun-filled day that kicks off with a parade through the town, where locals and visitors show off their "BYO" boats that rely on the power of human endurance and footwork to get anywhere.

As there is no water, entrants have to carry, pull, sand-ski or row their boat in the sand down the Todd in a mad dash to the finish line.

In 1993 the Regatta actually had to be called off because of rain – there was water in the Todd River.

This waterless regatta, aimed at raising funds for charity, will be held on August 19 this year.

CHECK IT OUT

Our top 10

This is a list of the top 10 rivers in Australia based on length. Can you find them on a map?

- Murray 2508km
- Murrumbidgee 1600km
- Bulloo 1580km
- Darling 1472km
- Lachlan 1450km
- Warrego 1380km
- Georgina 1130km
- Cooper Creek 1113km
- Flinders 1004km
- Diamantina 941km

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